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Director of Weights and Measures

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Department of Agricultural Commissioner/ Weights and Measures


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Richard K. Iizuka
Chief Deputy

DATE: August 13, 2015

TO: Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Mayor, Fifth District
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, First District
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, Second District
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, Third District
Supervisor Don Knabe, Fourth District

FROM: Kurt E. Floren 
Agricultural Commissioner
Director of Weights and Measures

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON MULTIPLE EXOTIC PESTS IN COUNTY

Since my previous update of July 15, 2015, there have been numerous developments regarding existing infestations of the significant citrus disease huanglongbing (HLB), also known as citrus greening, and the exotic insect pests Oriental Fly and Guava Fruit Fly.

Huanglongbing

Since the July 15, 2015, update, seven (7) additional citrus trees on residential properties in San Gabriel were confirmed to be infected with HLB and were removed, bringing the total to nine (9) trees located upon seven (7) properties within close proximity of one another. The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) continues to process thousands of plant tissue samples from citrus trees in the surrounding area to determine if there are more infected trees while also analyzing collected samples of Asian Citrus Psyllid, the vector of HLB, for presence of the disease bacterium. My staff is continuing to work closely with officials of CDFA and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to contain and eradicate HLB and to keep informed key staff of the involved Cities.

Thirty (30) nurseries that carry citrus nursery stock are located within the quarantine area (see Attachment A). CDFA staff placed 8,040 citrus plants on hold and nearly all have now been destroyed and discarded, thus preventing artificial spread of the disease through movement of the plants.

Oriental Fruit Fly *Bactrocera dorsalis*

Westchester/Inglewood

Since my last update of July 6, 2015, one additional male specimen of Oriental Fruit Fly (OFF) has been detected in the Westchester area, occurring yesterday, Wednesday, August 12. The third male attractant technique (MAT) treatment to effect eradication, as described in the July 6 update, was completed on Wednesday, August 5. The fourth treatment is scheduled for Monday, August 17.

Covina

Another OFF infestation has since been detected in the Covina area. A female OFF specimen was detected in Covina, Tuesday, July 7, which prompted delimitation (intensive trapping densities) by CDFA to determine if there existed an infestation. The delimitation trapping resulted in detection of a male OFF specimen on Wednesday, July 29, in West Covina, two additional males on one Covina property on Saturday, August 1, and OFF larvae were detected on a Covina property on Monday, August 3. The first male attractant technique (MAT) application for the Covina area was completed on Sunday, August 9. The second treatment is scheduled for Friday, August 21. The number and proximity of detections also warrants establishment of a quarantine to restrict movement of specific fruits, vegetables, and plant materials from and through the area, including material grown by residents or distributed by businesses (See Attachment B for male attractant technique area and quarantine area). On Friday, August 7, I requested that the Secretary of Food and Agriculture proceed with establishment of that quarantine.

Torrance/Carson

In Carson, a male OFF specimen was detected on Friday, June 26, a female specimen was detected on Monday, August 3, and a second male specimen was detected Tuesday, August 4. To control and eliminate risks of an expanded infestation, an initial MAT application in the Torrance/Carson area began yesterday, Wednesday, August 12 (See Attachment C).

Long Beach

In Long Beach, a male OFF specimen was detected on Wednesday, August 5, and a second male was detected on Saturday, August 8. MAT treatments will be forthcoming.

Guava Fruit Fly *Bactrocera correcta*

Since my last update of May 12, 2015, notifying you of a May 6 detection of six (6) Guava Fruit Flies (GFF) in a single trap in North Long Beach, two additional male specimens were detected in Long Beach, on May 12 and May 13, respectively, bringing the total to eight (8) specimens. The seventh male attractant technique for the original six specimens was completed on Tuesday, August 11, and an eighth treatment is scheduled for Monday, August 24. The sixth male attractant technique for the two additional specimens was completed on Friday, July 31, and a seventh treatment is scheduled for Friday, August 14.

Additional Exotic Insect Pests

This is proving to be an exceptionally active year for pest introductions, as additional specimens of these and other exotic fruit flies have been detected in various locations of the county since January. However, the detections have not met conditions (count and proximity) warranting eradication actions by CDFA, and it is hoped that such will remain the case.

Criticality of Prompt Responses to Exotic Pest Detections

These assorted exotic fruit fly species are not native to California nor are they established in the state. If any of these pests were allowed to spread and become established, they could pose significant threats to agriculture, home gardens, and native species due to the conduciveness of our climate to supporting their prolific reproduction coupled with the fact that each is known to attack a wide variety of host plants, fruits, and vegetables. If undetected or left unaddressed, the results of widespread infestations could include greatly increased use of pesticides, lower yields of fruits and vegetables, degradation or destruction of landscaping plants, and potentially devastating effects upon our local and statewide agricultural industries.

The Honorable Board of Supervisors

August 13, 2015

Page 3

Although program activities to prevent exotic pest infestations continue to intercept most exotic insect pests and plant diseases before they can find their way into our ecosystem, we are currently experiencing an unusually high incidence of such pest detections in the local environment. Routine detection trapping performed by Department of Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures (ACWM) staff, as well as targeted delimitation trapping by CDFA, are designed to promptly discover infestations and reveal their extent. The County of Los Angeles ACWM Exotic Pest Detection Program staff members are doing an outstanding job of successfully trapping and identifying these pests, evidenced by the lack of any significant numbers of detections following implementation of control and eradication measures quickly employed following initial finds.

As Los Angeles County is a major shipping gateway into California and the United States, a major center for tourism, and home to millions who often travel to other states and countries, it remains imperative that we continue our vigilance against infestations of destructive exotic pests. This recent wave of exotic pest introductions serves to emphasize the importance of that work.

I will continue to update you as details become available and warrant an update.

Residents may be directed to call the CDFA Pest Hotline at 1-800-491-1899 if they believe they have an infected tree, an exotic insect pest, or have questions about eradication efforts.

KEF:kp

c: Sachi Hamai, Interim Chief Executive Officer
Patrick Ogawa, Acting Executive Officer
Sheila Williams, Senior Manager, Executive Office
Board Deputies

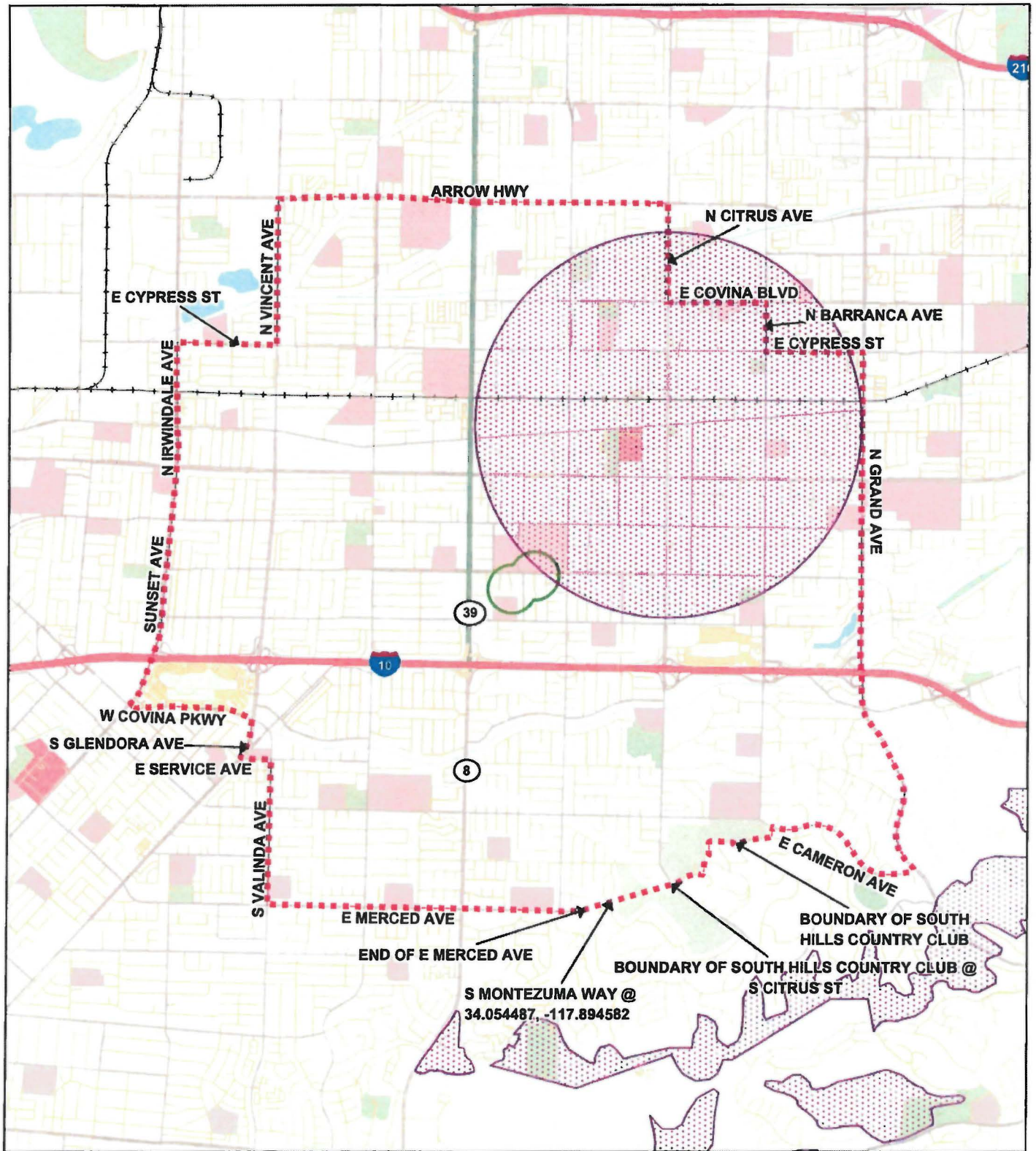
2015 Huanglongbing (HLB) Los Angeles/Orange Counties



180 sq Miles
3 sq Miles Orange County
177 sq Miles Los Angeles County



ORIENTAL FRUIT FLY COVINA, LOS ANGELES COUNTY 2015



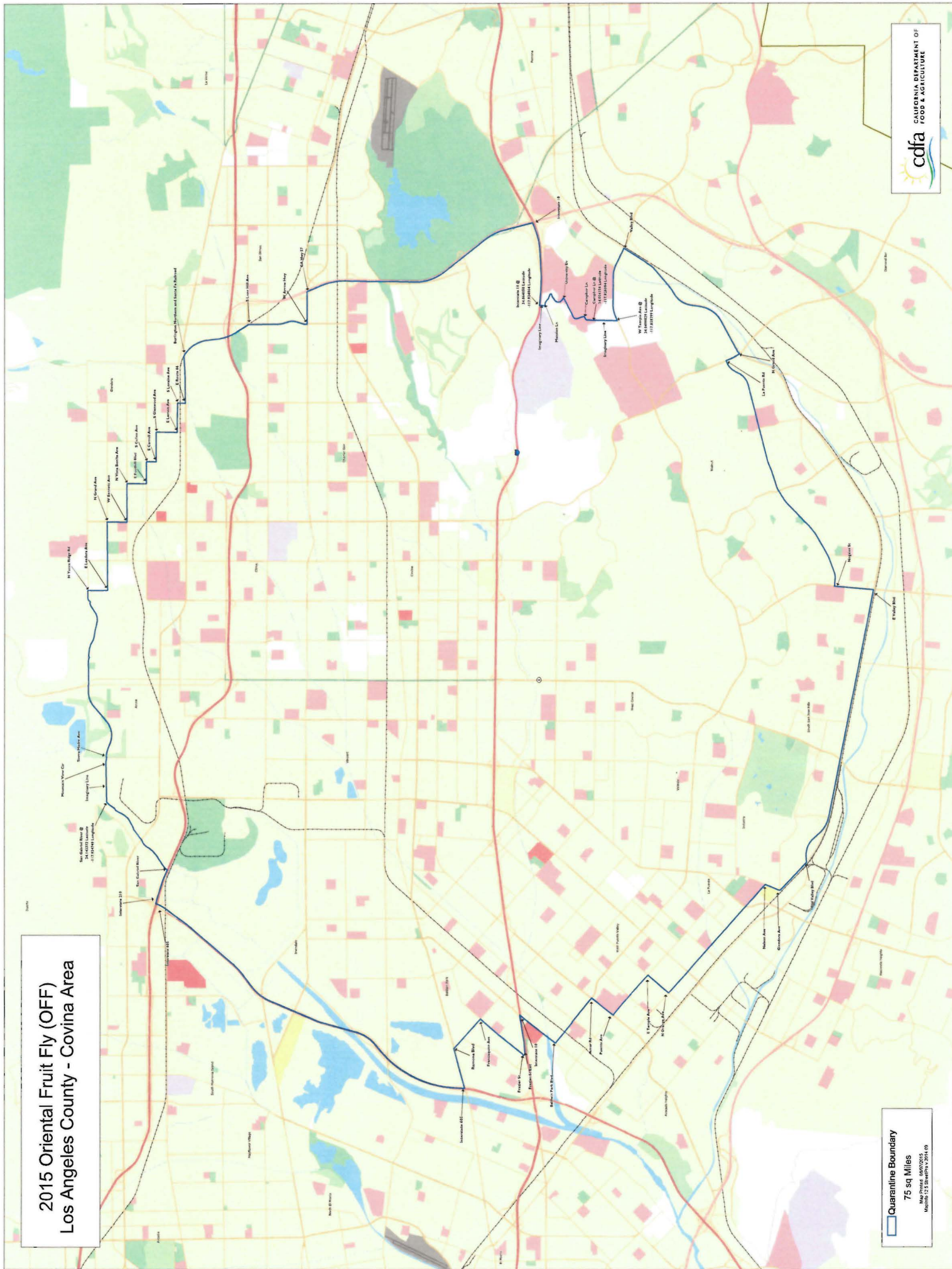
..... MAXIMUM PROGRAM BOUNDARY

○ PROPOSED 200M TREATMENT BOUNDARY

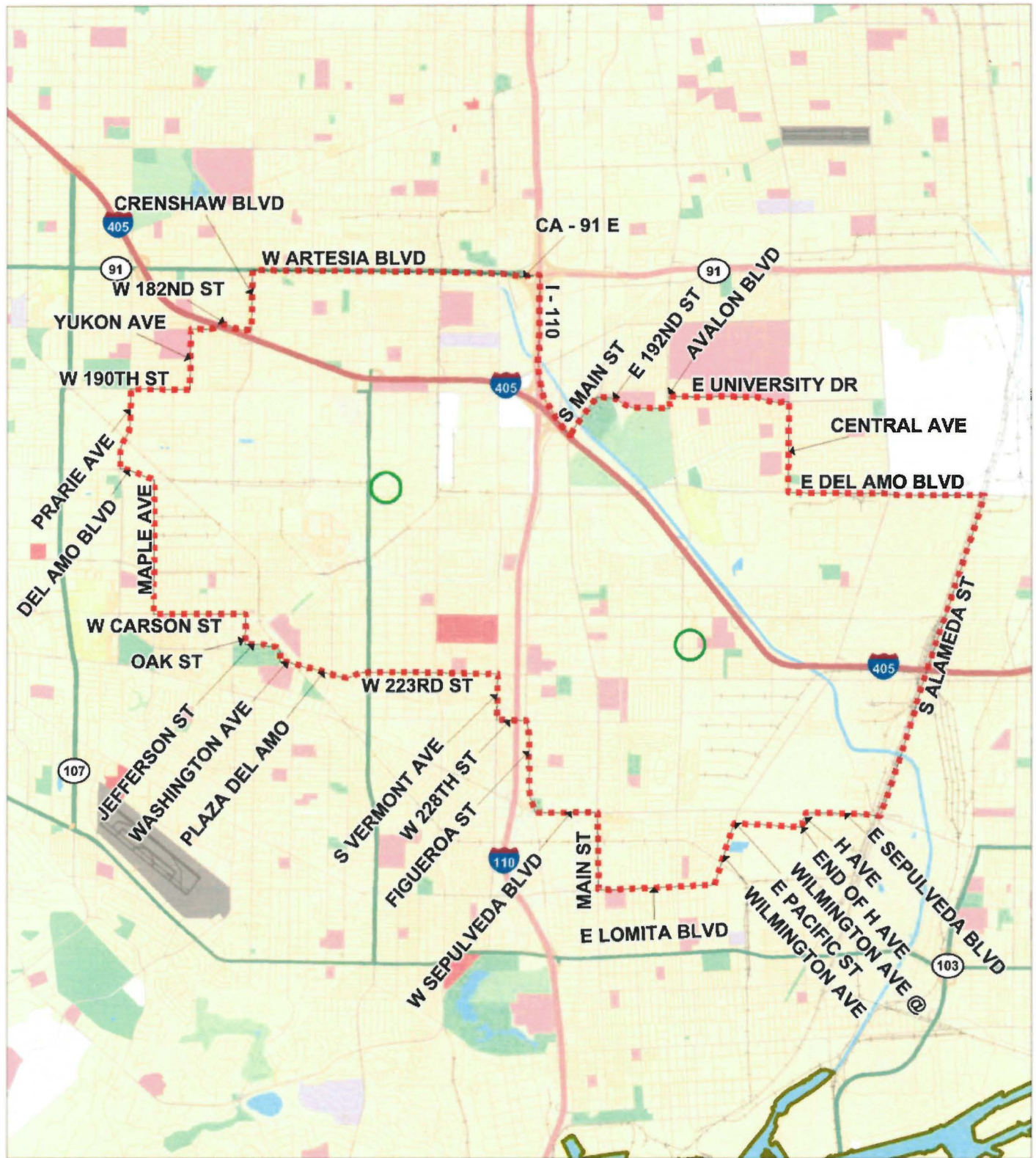
■ SENSITIVE ENVIRONMENTAL AREA / TREATMENT MITIGATIONS IN PLACE

2015 Oriental Fruit Fly (OFF) Los Angeles County - Covina Area

Quarantine Boundary
75 sq Miles
Map Printed: 08/07/2015
Version: 123 08/07/2015 v 2014.09



**ORIENTAL FRUIT FLY
TORRANCE, LOS ANGELES COUNTY
2015**



..... MAXIMUM PROGRAM BOUNDARY

○ PROPOSED 200M TREATMENT BOUNDARY



SENSITIVE ENVIRONMENTAL AREA / TREATMENT MITIGATIONS IN PLACE